This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 004319

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/09/2013
TAGS: PREL PGOV TU
SUBJECT: TURKISH REACTIONS TO IRAQ INCIDENT: AK GOVERNMENT
PROTECTING CLOSE BILATERAL TIES WITH U.S.

REF: A. ANKARA 4299
     ¶B. ANKARA 4278
     ¶C. ANKARA 4240

(U) Classified by Deputy Chief of Mission Robert S. Deutsch.
Reason: 1.5 (b)(d).

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AK Government Underscores Importance of Relations with U.S.
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¶1. (U) Speaking to reporters July 9, F.M. Gul expanded on the
AK Government's measured stance on the July 4 incident
involving U.S. and Turkish troops in Iraq. Gul observed that
the visit of General Jones shows the importance the U.S.
attaches to friendship with Turkey. Asked whether he thought
the U.S. action had been locally driven, Gul reiterated his
view (contrary to the view being espoused by the TGS through
press leaks) that he assumed it was so and continued to do so.

¶2. (U) Gul also addressed growing Turkish concern that the
U.S. Senate will adopt an "Armenian genocide" resolution this
week. "It is the Congress," he averred. "That is, it is not
about the Administration. The Administration is very
sensitive on this subject and is trying (to be constructive).
 "It goes without saying that, in the end, parliaments and
assemblies are independent when making decisions."

Senior AK Rep. Even Stronger in Private

¶3. (C) Following Gul's statement, we sought a telephone
readout from AK party deputy chairman for policy Firat (de
facto the number two man in the party hierarchy). Firat
asked us to party headquarters, where in his usual low-key,
direct manner he made the following points:

-- AK had expected the Turkish military to create
provocations in northern Iraq to use not only against the
U.S. but also domestically against AK.

-- This latest incident has affected AK's democratization
drive in Turkey by giving "hawks in the TGS and other
Establishment circles" a tool to try to derail the seventh EU
harmonization package, which deals with civilianization of
the leadership of the National Security Council. In
addition, he claimed, the hawks are using the incident to
interfere with passage of an effective draft law to
reintegrate repenting PKK/KADEK cadres. In this regard,
Firat opined, the timing of the July 8 assassination attempt
against the governor of the southeastern province of Tunceli,
which the Turkish State is blaming on the PKK, suggest that
it may well have been a provocation organized by Turkish
security forces.

-- The TGS is fanning a strident campaign through leaks to
the press, especially "Cumhuriyet," and to opposition CHP,
both of which Firat called "the spokesmen of the military,"
to put pressure on AK and to divert attention from military
culpability in Iraq.

-- Given the way the Turkish State and armed forces are
structured, Firat said, it is doubtful that the Turkish
Special Forces in Suleimaniya acted independently of senior
military leadership. At the same time, Firat added, Ozkok
did not appear to be directly responsible for whatever was
going on; the problem as AK sees it is that Ozkok is not in
full control. In this regard, the TGS-directed media
campaign, he noted, is directed in part at affecting the
outcome of the end-of-August Supreme Military Council (YAS)
meeting, which ratifies the annual cycle of senior promotions
and retirements in the military.

-- A May poll which AK commissioned through ANAR (whose chairman is a state minister in the AK government but whose results have consistently been on target since well before the Nov. 2002 general elections) showed that only 11% of respondents nationwide would support a military coup, while 75% would oppose it.

-- Turning to the "Armenian genocide" question, Firat said that Gul is in secret talks with the Armenians and the AK government seeks a way to open the border and establish normal relations with Armenia in the near future. Passage of a resolution by the U.S. Senate would set this process back, he concluded.
PEARSON